

pattern beneath what are radically divergent views on man's nature and his destiny, than in any inherent unity of opinion revealed by the individual contributors. For Professor Montague, writing on 'The Future of Theism', 'to attribute to a God of Love the creation of the world of things as they are is blasphemy', and we must 'purge our religion of the immoral notion of divine omnipotence'. The analogy of God is Prometheus rather than Zeus, to be thought of 'not as a King of kings but as a Comrade of comrades, needing our aid as we need his in that unending pursuit of the ideal which for God no less than for man makes up the meaning of existence'. It need scarcely be said that M. Maritain, in dealing with 'A New Approach to God', is of another opinion (cf. the May issue of *BLACKFRIARS*).

It is perhaps not altogether just to single out such striking conflicts of opinion, though examples might be multiplied. The book is of the greatest importance as a mirror of our times, as a source-book for the religious and intellectual perplexities of a society that has lost the unitive principle that can alone resolve its divisions. Individually, the contributions are profoundly interesting. Thus what one supposes must be Ananda Coomaraswamy's last writing—'Art, Man and Manufacture'—reveals once more his unsurpassed clarity of judgment and his tireless insistence on the metaphysical implications of human work. And Werner Jaeger's 'Future of Tradition' has the authority we should expect.

Mr Carrick Smith, in *The Church and the Churches*, deals with the Christian bodies to which the previous books make frequent appeals for aid in the task of cultural restoration. His purpose is an admirable one: to show 'how differently Christians approach some of the vital questions of religion, and how fundamentally honest and worthy of respect these different approaches are'. Mr Smith sees no hope in the proposals made from time to time by eirenical groups which seek 'a common minimum of faith and order as a basis for reunion between the rival Christian churches'. 'It cannot be done' is his simple comment, and he provides instead a sincere and—in intention—an objective account of the churches and of the 'spiritual riches which men find and cherish in their own denominational traditions'. It is, of course, a delicate and thankless task. No reader will feel that his own tradition receives the treatment it deserves. On the other hand, no honest reader can feel other than grateful for a generous attempt at sympathetic understanding—the prerequisite of any work for Christian unity.

ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

THESE CHANGING YEARS. By Bernard Wall. (Harvill Press; 5s.)

The world in which we live is one that has become strange even to such comparatively young men as the author of this book. It is to them that immature minds look for enlightenment and the older generation for achievement. But what can they achieve in the midst of ruins, equipped only with tools of which they acquired

the mastery in the pre-atomic age of ten years ago? And how can they advise those who have some expectations of living on into a world completely alien from all their experience and unparalleled by anything described by the history professors? One of our most lively periodicals has lately given up a special number to a reasoned description of the world of ten years hence; but it is a description which is only offered as probable on condition that there is no major upheaval in science or politics in the intervening period. It is precisely this condition that does not seem to have even the attraction of an illusion:

Even in the last ten years the landmarks of Europe which had grown into and had become part of the being of men of my relatively young generation have disappeared and if one turned like Proust to the remembrance of things past one would be dealing not only with fleeting time and age and subtle changes of atmosphere but with a world that has been wiped out entirely and has become almost a distant period of history though it is only eight years since war broke out. Even to this change we could get accustomed were there any illusion of constancy in the present. But there are those who think that the revolutionary process is accelerating and the next ten years may bring even more startling changes than the war itself, if not in the development of plain science at least with another war. One may indeed have a feeling of homesickness for the world of gaslight and hansom cabs, of Whistler and Marie Bashkirtseff and George Moore—the names have become evocations of long ago—before this grinding process of revolution had been visibly set going in 1914.

The great temptation to the reviewer is to take refuge in clichés and hackneyed quotations: 'an age of transition', 'wandering between two worlds', the reversal of '*si la jeunesse savait*' (for the old no longer understand, and youth is powerless). They might serve for a while to rob the present of its empty uncertainty, but before long we should be forced to recognise the poverty of the resources with which we have to meet the Revolution. For meet it we must, and on its own brutal terms.

It is essentially a technical device; it no longer embodies a noble ideal, a passion for justice—indeed it is passionless and contemptuous of ideals. It is a means by which absurd men take advantage of human absurdity, to relieve their own sense of lonely futility and even by a strange charity to give their marching followers the social amenities of the barracks and the opportunity to dominate something. We ought then to be grateful to Bernard Shaw for his less painful method of moderating our absurdity, the hope of a life long enough for us to come to maturity. Christians have that hope, but they differ from Shaw as to the locality of its fulfilment: we are children, but we can grow in grace and be

perfected in glory. At the other extreme we know better the helplessness of man, the degradation and irrationality of sin: *Sein-zum Tode* is more significant for us than for the existentialist. But existentialism is a beginning.

It is important to turn away from our atheism (the apathetic atheism of the Catholics, as well as the militant atheism of the Communists) and look to the only possible source from which reality can be given to the essence. And that turning will be the entry into life 'most good and eternal', existence on the highest plane. We are back again at the primacy of contemplation. Perhaps it was the author's intention to direct our steps to the house at Bethany.

EDWARD QUINN

INDIAN ART ESSAYS. By H. G. Rawlinson, K. de B. Codrington, J. V. S. Wilkinson and John Irwin. (Faber and Faber; 7s. 6d.)

The general and lively interest in Indian art recently aroused by the exhibition held at Burlington House was accompanied by an equally strong feeling that here is something which, though strangely compelling, is expressing an essentially unfamiliar beauty. Obviously this apparent ignorance should not act as a deterrent debarring the spectator from a purely aesthetic enjoyment of the works before him. But that it is a limitation cannot be denied, and the immediate aim of this small book is to endeavour to eliminate at least some of those problems. It consists of essays by four authorities on various aspects of India, opening with a brief exposition of the main trends of Indian history—a map here would have made the text easier to comprehend! Although the writers are to be congratulated for having succeeded in presenting a subject of immense complexity in a lucid and very readable manner.

The tremendous range and variety of artistic achievement (sculpture, drawing and the native crafts, weaving, pottery, jewellery, etc.) fall into perspective and become related to the ever-changing religious, political and sociological background of India. Unity is given to the multifarious foreign influences that were brought to bear upon the indigenous arts of the country. A fundamental element in Indian art is a delight in representing natural phenomena. It is to be found in the art of prehistoric India, for example in the seals discovered in the Indus Valley. Also, the gradual assimilation of the cults of the soil into Buddhism when it began to take shape as a religion of the people led, artistically, to far greater freedom of expression. This meant an abundance of scenes depicting animal forms in a variety of new and exciting ways. The inherent grasp of rhythm which underlies oriental art is not lacking in the vital and exuberant reliefs on the Stupas. Again it is evident in the carvings on the medieval rock-cut temples. In spite of strong